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The works of GOD, *and his wonders in the deep.*

A

SERMON

Occasion'd by the

DEATH

OF

Capt. *DIGORY HEARLE.*

Preach'd at *Ratcliff*, July 14, 1734.

By *JER. TIDCOMBE.*

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W. Musgrave.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE MASTERS of SHIPS, AND OTHER SEA-FARING PERSONS, Who attend my MINISTRY.

My Dear Friends,

I Shall make no apology to the world, for publiſhing the following diſcourſe; and, I perſuade myſelf, I need make none, for addreſſing it, in this manner, to you. The ſubject is not, I confeſs, what I ſhould

have chose for the occasion; but, as it led me to say several things, that are peculiarly suited to your circumstances, which perhaps I could not otherwise have said, with so much propriety, I was not displeased, that it was chosen for me.

As your business often calls you to sojourn in the great, and wide sea, at an awful distance from your families, and friends, from the house of *God*, and the habitable parts of the earth; where you cannot help seeing the works of the *Lord*, and are naturally disposed, by such a situation and prospect, to consider the operations of his hands; (I am ready to flatter myself,) you will not think this discourse an unsuitable, or unworthy, and, I hope, you will not find it altogether an unprofitable companion there. And, if it help to raise your minds

to

to a devout contemplation of the wonderful works of *God*, and teaches you how to make up the want of other company, and converſation, by converſing with your *Maker*; I ſhall have no reaſon to repent, nor others to cenſure, the publication of it.

I ſhall add no more, but my ſincere and fervent prayers; that, as often as you go down to the ſea, you may have the preſence of *God* with you, and his bleſſing upon your lawful endeavours:---That you may be the continual charge of his providence, whom the winds and waves obey; and that your families may be under the *divine* protection, in your abſence:---Above all, that while you are at ſo much pains, and expoſe yourſelves to ſuch innumerable difficulties and dangers, to obtain a precarious poſſeſſion of the good things of

of this life, you may not want wiſdom and grace to ſeek an everlaſting inheritance in the other; which you may not only be more ſure of obtaining, but ſecure with leſs labour, and leſs hazard.

I am,

Your affectionate friend,

and humble ſervant,

JER. TIDCOMBE.

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PSALM CVII. 29, 30, 31.

He maketh the ſtorm a calm, ſo that the waves thereof are ſtill.
Then are they glad becauſe they be quiet; ſo he bringeth them to their deſired haven.
O that men would praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.

THESE words may appear, at firſt view, to be ſo unlike the occaſion of my diſcourſing on them, and a *text* that ſpeaks of *thankſgiving* ſeem ſo improper a foundation for a *funeral ſermon*; that you will poſſibly expect I ſhould make ſome apology for the *choice* of it. But as this *Pſalm* is peculiarly calculated for the uſe of *ſea-faring perſons*, our *deceas'd friend*, it ſeems, frequently read it over with a pious pleaſure and delight, applying the general obſervations of the *Pſalmiſt* of the care of *Providence* over them to himſelf, and taking occaſion from hence to review with thankfulneſs the parti-

cular deliverances it had wrought out for him. And, as 'tis natural to us to imagine that what is peculiarly affecting to our own minds will be apt to make the ſame impreſſions on other perſons, in the ſame circumſtances, he choſe theſe words for this occaſion; hoping, no doubt, that ſince there are many, who uſually attend the worſhip of *God* in this place, that have formerly gone *down to the ſea in ſhips*, and others, whoſe *buſineſs* is ſtill *in great waters*, they would be as appoſite to your caſe as they were to his, and fitted to teach you the ſame leſſon of gratitude to divine *Providence*, which he wiſely learn'd from them. So that by theſe words your friend, *being dead*, may yet be conceiv'd as *ſpeaking* to you; thoſe of you that follow the ſame buſineſs and occupation, that he did for the greateſt part of his life, calling you to a devout and thankful recollection and acknowledgment of the *goodneſs of God*, and of *his wonderful works to the children of men.* And in this he calls you to no more, than what *Nature* and *Providence*, reaſon and ingenuity, the obſervation and experience of others as well as your own, loudly called you to before.

THE *works of God* themſelves indeed *praiſe* him, *in all places of his* immenſe and unbounded *dominions.* But they *praiſe* him in ſilence only, as they have the viſible marks of the *finger of God* upon them, and appear to be the work of *Omnipotence.* Thus *the heavens d-*

clare

clare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth forth his handy-work [a]. And tho' *there is no ſpeech nor language among them*, ſtrictly ſpeaking, yet there are ſuch plain and evident ſignatures, to be ſeen on them, of the power, wiſdom and goodneſs of that *Almighty* being that created and formed them, that in the ſublime and elegant language of ſacred poeſy, and in the ear of reaſon, *their voice* is notwithſtanding ſaid to be *heard*, *their line is gone out thro' all the earth, and their words to the end of the world* [b].

What tho', in ſolemn ſilence, all
Move round this dark terreſtrial ball?
What tho' nor real voice, nor ſound
Amid their radiant orbs be found?
In reaſon's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice;
—— ——
ADDISON.

AND this is the language they ſpeak, the *voice* they utter; *O that men would praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!* This is certainly one of the moſt important and uſeful inſtructions you can learn, whether you take it from the *works* of God, or from his *word*, from the exhortation of the *living*, or from the admonition of the *dead*, who ſpeaks this to you with an awful, tho' not with a ſenſible voice. And if this circumſtance makes you the more attentive

[a] Pſal. xix. 1. [b] ver. 3, 4.

attentive to it, that he *being dead ſpeaketh* this to you, this will be one good uſe of his death, as the learning it will be a happy preparation for your own. Praiſing *God* is the work of *heaven*, and one principal way by which you are to be train'd up to it. And if you do but in good earneſt apply and accuſtom yourſelves to praiſe *God* on earth, you may be ſecure that, as time wou'd fail you to recount *the wonderful works* he hath done, you ſhall have an eternity *to utter his mighty acts*, and that as you can never *ſhew forth all his praiſe*, you ſhall never ceaſe praiſing him

In diſcourſing farther on this ſubject, I ſhall,

I. Take ſome notice of *the works of God, and his wonders in the deep*, to which the *Pſalmiſt* refers in my text; conſidering them eſpecially as ſo many inſtances of divine goodneſs to mankind.

II. Enquire what praiſe is due to God for his *goodneſs*, and for theſe *his wonderful works to the children of men.*

III. Mention ſome peculiar Obligations, which they are under to *praiſe* him for them, *who go down to the ſea in ſhips, and do buſineſs in great waters*, and by that means are called to *ſee* and obſerve *the works of God, and his wonders there.* At the cloſe of which I ſhall endeavour to apply theſe things briefly to the ſolemn occaſion of this ſervice. And then

IV.

IV. Conclude all with ſome *proper and uſeful Reflections* from the whole.

I. My text calls me to take ſome notice of the *works of God, and his wonders in the deep*, and to conſider them eſpecially as ſo many inſtances and effects of the divine *goodneſs* to mankind.

Indeed the *works of God are* all *great, ſought out of all them that have pleaſure in them*[a]. And *they that are wiſe, and will obſerve theſe things*, will ſee abundant arguments, as they ſee innumerable effects, of the power, wiſdom and goodneſs of the great *Creator* and *Governor* of the world, which way ſoever they turn their eyes. As thoſe arguments of the being and perfections of *God*, that ariſe from his works, are moſt obvious and eaſy to be underſtood, and apt to ſtrike the deepeſt conviction on the mind, if ſeriouſly attended to; ſo they are always at hand, and meet us wherever we go. If we aſcend upwards in our thoughts, and *conſider the heavens the work of* God's *hands*, the *ſun, moon and ſtars, which he hath ordained*; or if we go no farther than this globe, on which we live and breathe; if we ſurvey the *earth* that is the habitation of *men*, or go down and viſit the *ſea* that is inhabited by *fiſhes*; wherever we go, we may eaſily trace the footſteps of our *Maker*, and ſee that an *Almighty* being has been before us. Who elſe is it, that hath formed the *heavenly*

[a] Pſal. cxi. 2.

venly bodies, and eſtabliſh'd the inconceivably vaſt and numberleſs ſyſtems of the *univerſe?* Who is it, that hath ſet up that vaſt globe of fire in the heavens, in particular, that gives light and heat to the *earth*, and to the reſt of the planetary worlds, that belong to our ſyſtem? And by what contrivance hath it been fed with ſuch a continual ſupply of fuel, that it hath kept on burning with equal ſtrength and heat, ever ſince it was firſt kindled. And who is it that hath formed thoſe planetary worlds, and ſo wiſely adjuſted their motions, and determined their revolutions; that they ſhould all move in ſuch proper ſpaces, and revolve within ſuch certain and fixed periods? and by what ſtrange energy are they held in and retain'd in their reſpective orbits, ſo that none of them have been ever ſuffer'd to wander out of the paths aſſign'd them, in ſo many ages, nor been loſt in the wide circuit of the *heavens*? ——— Or if, from ſurveying the *heavenly* bodies, we deſcend home to the *earth* on which we dwell, who is it that hath created this huge globe? and what power is it that keeps the frame of the world from diſſolving, and makes it hang ſo cloſely together, when yet 'tis plain it hangs upon nothing? And whence is it that the *earth* knows its due diſtance from the *ſun*, the fountain of light and heat? That it never approaches ſo near it, as to be burnt up

up with its *heat*, nor yet retires ſo far from it as to become *uninhabitable* thro' *extreme cold?* And *what wiſdom* hath taught it ſuch different motions and revolutions, as that *all* its *inhabitants* may partake their due ſhare of the influences of the *ſun*, and none of them be left in diſconſolate *darkneſs* and *cold* on the one hand, nor any expoſed to uninterrupted *light* and *heat* on the other?——Again, who is it that *commandeth the morning*, and cauſeth *the day-ſpring to know his place*[a]? And hath ſo agreeably and uſefully divided our time for us, into *day* and *night*, and marked out the proper ſeaſons of labour and reſt to us? And whence ariſe the conſtant and regular viciſſitudes of the *ſeaſons*, by which the *year* is ſo beautifully diverſify'd? Whence is it that ſpring and autumn, ſummer and winter *know their place* too in it?——Farther, *who* is the kind *benefactor*, that hath ſo richly furniſhed this lower world with all things neceſſary and convenient for the ſupport and accommodation of *man*, the principal inhabitant and *Lord* of it? To what ſkill and contrivance ſhall we aſcribe the formation of *plants* and *animals*, "thoſe finiſhed pieces of nature, "as one calls them, that are plainly, in their "formation and original, abſolutely above "and beyond all the powers of mechaniſm, "and laws of motion;" and the almoſt infinite variety and conſtant ſucceſſion that are produced and preſerved in the animal and ve-

[a] Job xxxviii. 12.

getable world?—In fine, if we look no farther than ourſelves, and our own *ſpecies*, and conſider how many *reaſonable beings* are continually formed and brought into the world; if we reflect how *fearfully and wonderfully we are made*, how curiouſly wrought, and with what aſtoniſhing ſkill and contrivance the ſeveral *parts* and *members* of our bodies are framed and adjuſted; and all theſe animated and acted by a *living* rational *ſoul:* If we conſider theſe things, I ſay, with any due attention, we cannot help aſcribing *all* theſe *effects* to *one cauſe*, and fathering all this numerous *offspring* on the ſame *Almighty* parent[a]. And tho' 'tis no difficult matter to aſſign the *natural cauſes* of many ſurprizing *phænomena* in the *heavens* and the *earth*, yet we muſt be blind if we do not at the ſame time ſee that theſe are but *ſecondary* ones, and that there is a *firſt* and *inviſible cauſe* at work behind every *viſible* and *ſenſible* one, without which they cou'd not produce thoſe *effects* they do, in ſuch order and regularity.

BUT 'tis the *works of God, and his wonders in the deep*, that my text leads me more particularly to conſider and obſerve.

AND firſt, *they that go down to the ſea* will of courſe obſerve that the *ſea* is placed lower than the *land*, by which means the wiſe *author*

[a] See a dialogue on devotion, by my very ingenious friend Mr. *T. A.* p. 29, 30.

thor of *nature* hath provided that it ſhall not *overflow* it, hath chain'd in that unruly element, and ſaid to it, *hitherto ſhalt thou come, but no further, and here ſhall thy proud waves be ſtayed*[a]: And as the *earth* and its *inhabitants* are continually *ſupplied* with water from it, ſo by this means he hath taken care that they ſhould not be *annoy'd* by it; but that the ſuperfluous waters ſhould naturally run back to the fountain from which they originally came. By this means too theſe waters, that wou'd otherwiſe be greatly *injurious*, and even *deſtructive* to the earth and its inhabitants, are render'd highly *uſeful*; particularly as they carry off a great many other things along with them in their paſſage, that would be *offenſive* and *intolerable* if they were to remain; and not only ſo, but as they carry thoſe perſons *down* along with them *to the ſea* in their return, who have *buſineſs in great waters.* Now the appointing ſuch ſeparate places in the earth for the reception of *the waters*, that at firſt *ſtood above it*, and *gathering* them *together* into theſe places, both *nature* and *ſcripture* teach us to conſider as one of the *wonderful works* of God, *at* whoſe *rebuke they fled, at the voice of* whoſe *thunder they haſted away*[b].

NEXT to the ſituation of the *ſea*, the wide extent of it naturally occurs to our thoughts, in conſidering the *works of God, and his wonders in the great deep*, as it will do to

[a] Job xxxviii. 11. [b] Pſal. civ. 24

their obſervation, who *go down*, and ſee them there. What a vaſt collection of waters is here? What an *unfathomable* deep? and *unmeaſurable* ſurface? The Pſalmiſt calls it *the great and wide ſea*[a], tho' perhaps (as one remarks) he looked no farther than the *mediterranean*. What wou'd he have ſaid, if he had been *acquainted* with the *eaſtern* and *weſtern*, the *atlantick* or *ſouthern* oceans, which ſome of you have *viſited?* It is apt to ſtrike your minds with awe and aſtoniſhment, when you ſtretch your eyes to ſurvey the wide, the unbounded extent! Eſpecially if you think at the ſame time, as 'tis natural, and, I ſhould think, almoſt unavoidable to do, of that *Almighty* being, who hath *gather'd* theſe innumerable *waters together into one place*, and even *meaſur'd them* all *in the hollow of his hand*. Men indeed of little judgment and obſervation, and ſuch as are diſpos'd to find fault with the *works* of God, may be ready to aſk why *ſo great* a part of this globe ſhou'd be overflow'd by the *ſea*, and inhabited by *fiſhes*, and *ſo little* reſerv'd for more *noble inhabitants*; eſpecially conſidering that theſe are grown ſo numerous, that they often joſtle againſt one another, and are perpetually contending for more room. But if it be conſider'd, that if the *ſea* were confin'd within narrower limits, and the *dry land* extended further, there wou'd be a proportionably *leſs* quantity of vapours exhaled from the *ſea* to water

[a] *Pſal. civ. 28.*

water the earth, than there is now, and yet ſo much *more* earth to be water'd; that the *ſea* cou'd not then ſupply the *land* with ſo great a proportion of water, and yet that it wou'd need a much greater; this difficulty will preſently vaniſh, and we ſhall ſee abundant reaſon to acknowledge, that this *work* of God is as *wiſe*, as before it appear'd *wonderful.*

ANOTHER thing worth remarking, (altho' every one that *goes down to the ſea in ſhips*, &c. may not obſerve it,) is the *wiſe* and *commodious diſtribution* of it in the ſeveral parts of the world: That as this *globe* is pretty near equally divided between *land* and *water*, ſo they are not irregularly *jumbled* together, without *order* or *deſign*, but are *diſpos'd* in ſuch proper places, and in ſuch fit proportions, as *each* will beſt miniſter to the other in, and *both* of them to the uſe and advantage of its inhabitants. A ſuperficial obſerver of nature, 'tis true, may not underſtand the *wiſdom* and *deſign* of this diſtribution, and becauſe he does not ſee it, may haſtily conclude it was done without *wiſdom* or *deſign*. But the more we examine into the *ſtructure* of the world, the more we ſee of the *wiſdom* and *goodneſs* of *God* in the *contrivance* of it, and of the *weakneſs* and *wickedneſs* of men, in *preſuming* to find *fault* with it. Thus we find that the *earth* and *waters* are not only ſo ſituated and diſpoſed, *ſo workman-like laid*

(as

(as one expreſſeth it) *all the world over*, as to preſerve the *æquipoize* of the whole globe[a]; but ſo *admirably* well diſtributed, as to afford ſufficient vapours for clouds and rains, to temperate the heat of ſome climates and the cold of others, and to ſupply and ſatisfy the earth in both. And 'tis remarkable that thoſe places that *lie* under the *torrid zone*, do generally border upon the *ſea*; by which means the *wiſe* and *merciful Creator* of the world hath provided, that as they are in more need of the clouds and winds and rains to *ſhelter* them from the *heat* of the *ſun*, which without them wou'd be intolerable, to *cool* and *fan* the air, and *refreſh* the thirſty ground, than thoſe that live in more *temperate climates*, ſo they ſhou'd oftner have the benefit of them. It is worth a remark too, that by this means they *have* moſt clouds and rain, at the time when they are in *moſt need* of them; I mean, when the *ſun* is directly over them; from whence it comes to paſs, that that is always their *cooleſt* ſeaſon, which otherwiſe wou'd be their *hotteſt*.——In ſhort, *earth* and *water* are ſo conveniently laid out and ſituated on the face of this *globe*, as if they had been *weigh'd* in a balance, and *meaſur'd* out according to the moſt exact proportion. And this the *ſcripture* intimates to us, not obſcurely, when ſpeaking of the power and providence of God, it ſays, *who hath meaſured*

[a] Mr. *Derham* in his Phyſico-Theology. B. II. C. v.

meaſured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and comprehended the duſt of the earth in a meaſure, and weigh'd the mountains in ſcales, and the hills in a balance[a]? Accordingly *Moſes*, in the hiſtory of the *creation*, ſpeaking of the firſt ſeparation of the *water* from the *land*, and *God's gathering* the *waters*, that before *cover'd the* whole *earth*, *into one place*, makes uſe of a word, that implies the *niceſt regularity* and *exactneſs*[b], as tho' he had *poured out* the water by *meaſure* on the face of the earth, and *diſpoſed* it in the *fitteſt* places and the *juſteſt* proportions.

Now it is from this *great fountain* that the *earth* and its *inhabitants* are continually *ſupplied*, as I have had occaſion already to obſerve. By the wonderful chymiſtry of *nature* freſh water is continually extracted from the *ſalt* ſeas, a thing that hath hitherto baffled the art of all other *chymiſts*, and by as *wonderful* a contrivance diſtributed, from time to time, all the world over in ſuch *quantities* as may ſerve the *occaſions* of both. I muſt not ſtay to explain this ſtrange *proceſs* of *nature*, or rather of the *Author* of nature, in exhaling pure vapours from the *ſea*, teaching them to aſcend into the upper regions of the air, there forming them into

[a] Iſai. xl. 12.

[b] Geneſ. i. 9 יקוו המים verbum hoc deducitur ἀπὸ τοῦ קו, id eſt, *linea*, *perpendiculum*, unde credibile eſt, aquas hîc mitti in loca, in quibus quaſi æquatæ ad libellam ſe continerent. *Clerici* comment. ad loc.

into clouds, and from thence diſtilling to the earth in refreſhing dews and fruitful ſhowers. You will eaſily obſerve, that 'tis by the influence of the *ſun* that theſe vapours are *rais'd* out of the *ſea*, as 'tis by the force of the *wind*, that the *clouds* and *rains* are *ſcatter'd* over the face of the *earth*. And methinks I ſhou'd have as little need to tell you, *who* it is that hath commanded the ſun and the wind thus to *purvey* for the *world*, and *them that dwell therein:* And taught the waters of the *ſea* to viſit the remoteſt parts of the *land*, and *fall* on the mountains which he hath forbid them to *climb*. How can we behold divine bleſſings flowing in thus every way upon us, and not break out into the grateful expreſſions of the *Pſalmiſt*, *O that men would praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs, and for his wonderful works to the children of* men; who *calleth for the waters of the* ſea, *and poureth them out upon the face of the* earth [a]!

AND as the various *inhabitants* of the *earth* are ſupplied with water continually from the *great deep*, ſo 'tis itſelf the *habitation* of an inconceivable variety of creatures. The ſhape and ſize of *many* of them are *prodigious*, and yet the *wiſdom* of the great *Creator* of the world is plainly to be ſeen in the *ſtructure* and *make* of them *all*, as his *goodneſs* is conſpicuous in the ſeveral *uſes* they ſerve to mankind, to whom he *hath given dominion over the fiſhes*

[a] Amos v. 8.

fiſhes of the ſea, as well as *the fowls of the air. The earth is full of thy riches; ſo is this great and wide ſea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both ſmall and great beaſts*; (ſo that neither part of this globe lies *waſte* and *void*, but each is *peopl'd* with inhabitants proper to it.) *There go the ſhips; there is that* Leviathan, *which thou haſt made to play therein. He maketh the great deep to boil like a pot, he maketh a path to ſhine after him, one would think the deep to be hoary. Theſe wait all upon thee, that thou mayſt give them their meat in due ſeaſon; that thou giveſt them they gather: thou openeſt thine hand, they are filled with good*[a]. *Our father, which* is *in heaven*, is the common *parent* of the *univerſe* of beings. The ſeveral ſpecies of creatures, that inhabit the *earth* and *ſea*, are a part (and but a part) of his family: and, like the great *father* of the family, he ſits at the head of the table, and *carves* for this *whole creation*. But his peculiar care and concern is for man. He *feeds* the other creatures, that they may *become food* for him; and makes the *ſea*, as well as the *earth*, contribute to his ſubſiſtence and entertainment; and that not only by *filling his cup*, but alſo by ſupplying his *table*. Methinks, when we take a view of theſe *works of God*, and conſider his *tender mercies* that are *over all, and over* ourſelves eſpecially, gratitude and devotion ſhould ſpring up ſo faſt in our minds, that we ſhould want words to give

[a] Pſal. civ. 24,—28. Job xli. 31, 32.

vent to the fullneſs of our hearts. How can you be inſenſible of your obligations to your *almighty* parent and benefactor? *Speak to the* earth, *and it ſhall teach thee, and the* fiſhes *of the ſea ſhall declare unto thee: Who knoweth not in all theſe, that the hand of the* Lord *hath wrought this*[a]?

The preſerving ſo *vaſt* a collection of *waters ſweet and wholeſom*, and keeping them from *ſtagnating* and *corrupting*, is another thing that ſhould not be paſſed over, while we are conſidering the *works of God, and his wonders in the deep*. And the means, by which this is done, are ſo many diſtinct *wonders* he performs there. Particularly,

The *ſaltneſs* of the *ſea itſelf* contributes a great deal to keep it from *corrupting*. This alſo gives a ſtrength and conſiſtence to the *waters* of the *ſea*, by which they are enabled to carry the greater burdens, and the better to bear up the *loaded veſſel*, or the *ſhipwreck'd paſſenger*. But tho' the *uſes* of this are ſo obvious, the *cauſes* of it are not ſo eaſily underſtood. Indeed, were we able to account never ſo certainly for it, it would ſtill remain one of *God's works*, and of his *wonders in the deep*.

The *conſtant fluctuations* of the *tides*, by which the *ſea* is kept in continual *agitation*, is another means of keeping it from *corrupting*. Theſe are *God's* meſſengers, whom he ſends to fetch you *down to the ſea* (who have *buſineſs in great waters*) and bring you

[a] Job xii. 8, 9.

you up again to *land.* 'Tis amazing to behold the rapid ſtream thus change its *natural courſe* of a ſudden, and return back again *faſter* than before it *ran down.* One can hardly help borrowing the *Pſalmiſt*'s words on this occaſion, which he ſpoke with reference to *God's* dividing *Jordan*, to make a path for the *Iſraelites* to paſs over, and applying them to this[a]: *What ailed thee, O thou ſea, that thou fleddeſt? thou* river, *that thou waſt driven back?* And tho', from obſerving that the *courſe* of the *tides* does regularly follow the *changes* of the *moon*, 'tis obvious to infer, that they are *governed* in a great meaſure by it; yet we ought ſtill to remember, there is a *ſuperior governor* ſitting in the *heavens*, who hath taught the *moon* thus to rule, and the *ſea* to obey. That theſe *wonders in the deep* are the plain effects of *natural* cauſes, and regularly and ſtatedly produced by them, does not make them at all the leſs the *works of God*; nor ſhould it make us at all the more backward to aſcribe them to *Him*, that we know the *particular* cauſes, from which they ariſe. 'Tis the ſame awful *power* and *preſence*, that once made *Jordan roll back*, that teacheth the *flood* to run up, and fetch you down from time to time on your voyages. How ſhould you ſtand in awe of that *God*, before whom the *mountains* of the earth *tremble*, and at whoſe *preſence* the proud *waves* of the *ſea* retire? And what *praiſe* and *thankſgivings* are due to

[a] Pſal. cxiv. 5.

that *almighty* goodneſs, that comes in ſuch an unuſual path to meet you, and makes even the *ſea flee*, and the *rivers run back*, to carry you out, and return you home?

ONCE more, *the frequent and violent agitations*, that are raiſed in it by the force of the *winds*, are of like uſe and ſervice with the *tides* themſelves. And this is another of the *works* of God, and of his *wonders in the deep*, which you who *go down* to it cannot help *obſerving*, and often obſerve with *fear* and *aſtoniſhment*. 'Tis awful merely to *think* how the *ocean* frequently heaves and ſwells! to what heights its proud waves aſpire! how they lift up the *trembling paſſengers!* and to what depths they ſuddenly ſink again! But 'tis more aſtoniſhing to *behold* theſe mountains riſe on the face of the *ſea*, *fall* again into the *great deep*, and *riſe* and *fall* yourſelves with them! Well, you know *who* it is *commandeth and raiſeth the ſtormy wind*, which *lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heavens, they go down again to the depths* at his bidding. Theſe *winds* are abſolutely neceſſary for the *ſea*, however terrible to the *ſeaman*, and of great uſe and ſervice on the whole, though they prove deſtructive to particular perſons. They *come out of* the *treaſuries* of the Almighty, even when they *bring* deſtruction along with them. The *ſtormy winds fulfil his word*, and, in ſome inſtances perhaps, have *taught* men to *obey* it. He *bringeth the wind out of his treaſuries*, to drive

drive you to your duty, and *bring* you on your knees before him. And as 'tis at his *command* that the *ſtormy wind* is raiſed, ſo at your *call* has it not been often laid? Your *ſoul* hath *melted becauſe of trouble*, you have *reeled to and fro, and ſtagger'd like a drunken man. Then* you *cried to the Lord in* your *trouble, and he brought* you *out of* your *diſtreſs.* Which leads me to conſider,

ANOTHER of God's *works and wonders in the deep*, (which is the laſt I ſhall mention) and that is the conduct and preſervation of thoſe, *that go down to the ſea in ſhips, and do buſineſs in great waters.*

IF we conſider the *raging ocean* they travel upon, and examine the *floating veſſel* that carries them, one would be ready to wonder how men came firſt to have the courage to *go down to the ſea in ſhips*[a], or even the skill to build them. But you know *who* drew the plan of the *firſt* ſhip that was ever built, and the *richeſt* that was ever committed to the mercy of winds and waves; the *wealth* of the world, and even the *life* of mankind, being

[a] Illi robur & æs triplex
Circa pectus erat, qui fragilem truci
Commiſit pelago ratem
Primus: nec timuit præcipitem Africum
Decertantem Aquilonibus,
Nec triſtes Hyadas, nec rabiem Noti;
. . . . . .
Quem mortis timuit gradum,
Qui ſiccis oculis monſtra natantia,
Qui vidit mare turgidum, &
Infames ſcopulos Acroceraunia?
. . . . . .
il mortalibus arduum eſt. HORAT. *Carminum* lib. 1.

ing embark'd on that *ſingle bottom*. He, that made the *earth* and *ſea*, firſt taught the *inhabitants* of the former to become *ſojourners* on the latter. And *they*, *that go down to the ſea*, are ſtill led by the hand of *providence*, and cannot proceed on their voyages without leave from *heaven*. They may *unfurl* their ſails, and ſpread them before the *wind*, but they cannot *fill them*. And tho' the *needle itſelf*, that teacheth them how to ſteer their courſe, is the ordinary *workmanſhip* of human art; yet the *power* it has to direct them, is derived from one of the *wonderful works of God*[a]. In ſhort, *navigation* is an *art*, that *nature* has taught mankind, and that depends more on the *providence* of *God*, than any other *buſineſs* and *occupation* of the *ſons of men*. And if we conſider, what *great* and important *advantages* they have obtain'd by it; that by this means *trade* and *commerce* are carried on between the moſt *diſtant* nations and countries, and a mutual *exchange* of benefits all over the *globe*, the *abundance* of ſome countries *ſupplying* the *want* of others, and their *want receiving* a *ſupply* in return from the *abundance* of others; that by

[a] The *loadſtone* may well be reckon'd among *the wonderful works of God*. The properties of it are ſo *very peculiar* and *extraordinary*, that it looks (as one ſays) rather like a *portion* of another *ſyſtem*, or another *world*, than a *part* of *ours*. That it ſhould have its diſtinct *poles*, the one inclining to the *north*, the other to the *ſouth*; that it ſhould *attract* iron and ſteel ſo ſtrongly; and not only ſo, but communicate theſe properties by a touch; ſo that the *needle* that's touched by it ſhall have the ſame *attractive* power, in a leſſer degree, that the *loadſtone itſelf* hath, and the ſame *verticity* to the *north-pole*, (not to mention ſeveral other ſurprizing properties of it) are things that *human philoſophy* knows not how to account for.

by this the *hiſtory* of *nature* and *providence* is greatly enlarged; nay, that by this the *goſpel* itſelf, that invaluable treaſure, has been convey'd to *nations*, that otherwiſe could never have *heard the joyful ſound*, and the *glad tidings* have reached to the *Britiſh iſles*, and even to the *American continent*; I ſay, if we conſider theſe important advantages, that ariſe from *navigation*, we cannot but think ourſelves under the higheſt obligations to that kind and beneficent *providence*, that hath *taught man* this uſeful and neceſſary *knowledge*.

And the preſervation of thoſe, that *go down to the ſea in ſhips*, &c. is as wonderful as the conduct by which they are led. The preſervation of ſuch a creature indeed, as *man* is, in any place, the *frame* of whoſe nature is ſo curiouſly wrought, and nicely ſet together, and conſequently may be ſo eaſily diſordered and ſhaken to pieces, may well be ſet down among the *miracles* of *providence*. *We are fearfully and wonderfully made*, and as *fearfully* and *wonderfully* preſerv'd. 'Tis really aſtoniſhing, that ſo *exquiſitely* curious a *machine* as the human body is, that conſiſts of ſo many ſprings and movements, ſhould be kept in *order* ſo long as it is; and ſhews, that the ſame almighty hand that formed it at firſt, is ſtill employed in guiding and preſerving its motions. But as the hand of *providence* is more viſible in protecting us from *outward accidents* that threaten us, than in preſerving us from *inward diſorders* and decays, ſo we

are

are generally more affected with it. And tho' we meet with dangers enough by *land*, to make us ſenſible of the conſtant and watchful care of *divine providence* over us, in guarding us ſafe thro' them; yet as thoſe whoſe *buſineſs* calls them to journey frequently acroſs the *ſeas* are more expoſed to dangers than other men, they ought to be more eſpecially affected with a ſenſe of their obligations to the *goodneſs* of *God* for their preſervation. It would be endleſs to reckon up the various accidents of the *ſeas*; the dangers that ariſe from *rocks* and *ſands*, from *winds* and *waves*, from *enemies* without, and *mutinies* within; not to mention the evils and inclemencies they are expos'd to in the *different climates* they are obliged to paſs, and the *unknown countries* they are ſometimes called to viſit. There are none of you who *go down to the ſea in ſhips*, and have done *buſineſs* for any conſiderable time *in great waters*, but what have often met ſuch dangers as theſe in your voyages, and ſometimes had as *wonderful* deliverances. You have been *toſſed by a violent tempeſt*, as St. *Paul* was in his voyage to *Rome*[a]; have been juſt ready to drive on *rocks*, or *quickſands*, inſomuch that *all hope that you ſhould be ſaved* has been *taken away*; and yet the *wind*, that *raiſed* your fears, has ſhifted in the critical moment, and *blown them away*. The *fire* has kindled about you, and the

[a] Acts xxvii. 14,——20.

the *flames* caught hold of your *floating habitation*, and yet you have been taught by ſome happy expedient, that has come into your thoughts (you know not how) to *overcome* them, after you concluded they had *you* in their *power*. Or perhaps you have been detained by contrary winds, till your proviſion has been all ſpent; you have begun to *look pale* with *hunger*, and deſpair of *relief*; nay, and have even concluded you had no *choice* left, but to *periſh* with *famine*, or *feed* on one another; and yet, even in this *extremity*, an *unexpected ſupply* has come in to preſerve you. You have *cried unto the Lord in your trouble*, and your cry hath reach'd his ear, for *he hath brought you out of your diſtreſſes. O that* you *would* therefore *praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs*, &c. For though a *brutiſh man* may not *underſtand this*, nor *fools* trouble themſelves to *conſider it*, *yet whoſo is wiſe, and will obſerve theſe things, even they ſhall underſtand the loving-kindneſs of God.* Which brings me,

II. To enquire what *praiſe* is due to *God for his goodneſs*, and for theſe *his wonderful works to the children of men.*

Now to *praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs*, in the general notion of it, is no other than to *acknowledge*, with a ſuitable gratitude, the *goodneſs* of *God*, and to *adore* and *magnify* him on account of it. As many ways therefore as there are of *acknowledging* the *goodneſs* of

God, and *his wonderful works*, ſo many are there of *praiſing* him. And *firſt*, the frequent and ſerious *contemplation* of the *works* of God, and of that wiſdom and goodneſs that appears in them, is one way of *praiſing him* for them. By ſtudying and obſerving the *wonderful works* of God, we acknowledge that they are indeed *great*, and worthy to be *ſought out* by all thoſe that are capable of underſtanding them. Whereas, if we paſs them by in negligence and forgetfulneſs, we in effect reproach them, as tho' they were not *wiſely* or *well* made, as if they were beneath our *notice*, or deſerved our *cenſure*. This is to ſhew leſs reſpect to the *works of God*, than we are every day ready to pay to thoſe of *human art*; and carries in it a *blaſphemous* inſinuation, that the *Maker* of the world is unworthy our regard, and *man* himſelf the *only important being* in it. Certainly, if there are any *works* in the world *worth obſerving*, they are the *works of him* who made it, and who *governs* it with the ſame amazing wiſdom and ſkill with which he at firſt *made* it. And the more cloſely and thoroughly we examine and endeavour to underſtand them, the greater tribute of *praiſe* we render to the *Author* of them.——Now from the *abundance of the heart the mouth* will *ſpeak* the *praiſes of God*; and that both in our addreſſes to *him*, and, as we have occaſion, in our converſation with one another. And this is a natural and rea-

reaſonable expreſſion of that *inward ſenſe* we ought always to cheriſh of the *divine greatneſs* and *goodneſs*, and a proper *means* of cultivating and increaſing it. Only we ſhould take care, that our *thoughts* and *lips* do indeed go together, and that our *praiſes* flow from *hearts* full of love and gratitude to that *infinite* and *adorable* Majeſty, to whom they are render'd. Otherwiſe it will not be *praiſing* God, but *mocking* him. For this purpoſe, we ſhould frequently employ our minds in recollecting his *wonderful works to the children of men*, and to ourſelves in particular; by which means we ſhall not only furniſh our minds with conſtant *materials* for *praiſe* and *thankſgiving*, but help to form them to an habitual *diſpoſition* to *offer* it. And indeed, for men *meerly to utter* the praiſes of God, without any ſuitable ſenſe of his *being* and *perfections* on their minds, is *praiſing* him in *no better*, and hardly in *any other* ſenſe, than the heavens *declare* his glory, and even brute and inanimate creatures on earth *praiſe* him. It is expected from *man*, who is a rational and intelligent creature, that he ſhould *praiſe* his *maker* in another, and a nobler ſenſe, than the *ſun moon* and *ſtars* above, or than *fire hail* and *ſnow* below; than the beaſts of the *field*, the fowls of the *air*, and the fiſhes of the *ſea*, are ſaid to *praiſe* him: *viz.* that he ſhould not only *ſpeak* the *praiſes* of *God*, (which would make but little difference) but that this verbal acknowledgment of his *good-*

neſs ſhould proceed from an *inward devotion* toward him, and an affecting ſenſe of his power, wiſdom, and goodneſs. The creatures below us *praiſe* their Maker *as well* as they can, and will all upbraid us if we do not *praiſe* Him *better*. Nay, if the *praiſes* that *men* pretend to offer to *God*, come only from the *lips* and the tongue, the *brute* creatures, and even ſtocks and ſtones, *praiſe* him better than *they*. To pay the *outward forms* of civility to your *Maker*, while you cheriſh at the ſame time a ſecret *hatred* of, or *indifference* to him, is *mocking* him in the ſame breath that you pretend to *worſhip* him, as if he could not ſee your hypocriſy, or would not puniſh it.—Let me only add, that if *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeak* the praiſes of *God*, the actions and converſation will ſpeak the ſame language. And, as the obedience of our lives to the divine commands is the *ſtrongeſt expreſſion* of our gratitude to divine goodneſs, 'tis the beſt and moſt *acceptable way* of *praiſing* God. Actions are the moſt faithful interpreters of the thoughts, and ſpeak a language that will neither *mock* God nor *deceive* men. *Whoſo* thus *offereth praiſe, glorifieth me, and to him that ordereth his converſation aright will I ſhew the ſalvation of God*[a]. *Rejoice in the Lord*, therefore, *O ye righteous, for praiſe is comely for the upright*[b].

I might mention ſeveral things, to ſhew you what a *reaſonable* ſervice this is: 'Tis an homage

[a] Pſal. l. 23. [b] Pſal. xxxiii. 1.

homage, that you *owe* to the *Author* of your beings and bleſſings, and which he hath the moſt righteous and equitable claim to from you. You *praiſe God*, when you only *declare* what *God* is, and *utter* the *mighty acts* he hath done. The whole creation *ſhews forth his handy-work*, but 'tis man only, that is capable of *ſeeing* and *admiring* the glory of it, of *enquiring where is the Lord* that *made* him, and giving him any active *praiſe*. So that, by the dignity and capacities of his nature, he is formed to be, as it were, the *high-prieſt* of the *creation*; not *only* to *offer* his own *thanks* to the *Author* of his *being*, but to render him the *praiſe* of all the reſt of his *works*. And conſequently, if he forget to *praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs*, &c. he forgets the main end of his being, and the chief errand for which he is ſent into the world. To what purpoſe then ſerves the profuſion of divine wiſdom and goodneſs in the works of nature and providence?

I might ſhew you, what an *eaſy tribute*, what a *delightful*, as well as *reaſonable*, *ſervice* this is! and how it naturally tends to ennoble your minds; to raiſe and refine them from all low appetites and paſſions, and to inſpire you with thoſe principles and diſpoſitions, that will render you *happy* in yourſelves, as well as the objects of the *divine favour* and approbation, and be the *ſureſt earneſt* of, as they are the *only preparation* for, that bleſſed world, where *the love of God* fills every heart, and

and his *praiſe* employs every tongue. But I muſt not now enlarge on the general obligations and advantages of this duty. I proceed

III. To mention ſome *peculiar* obligations, which they are under to *praiſe* him for them, who *go down to the ſea*, &c. and by that means are called to ſee and obſerve the *works of the Lord, and his wonders there.* And,

1. *They that go down to the ſea in ſhips, and do buſineſs in great waters*, are *eſpecially converſant* with the *works* of God, and therefore under *peculiar* obligations to *utter his praiſe.* 'Tis a remark of a very ingenious *author*[a], in favour of ſolitude and retirement, that in courts and cities we are entertained chiefly with the *works* of *men*, in rural ſcenes with *the works of God:* That the one is the province of *art*, the other of *nature.* There is this difference obſervable between *land* and *ſea. They that go down to the ſea*, and ſojourn in the *great deep*, ſee more of the *works* and *wonders* of *God*, and leſs of thoſe of *human art*, than are to be ſeen in the moſt ſolitary part of the country. They have indeed hardly any thing at all to converſe with, beſides the *works* of *God*; their eyes and ears can only report to them, what *God* has done, or is doing. If they look upward to the *heavens*, that are *ſtretched out as a curtain*, or canopy over them; *the heavens declare the glory of God,*

[a] Mr. *Addiſon.*

God, and the firmament ſheweth forth his handy-work. Or if they caſt their eye downward to the *ocean*, that looks like an immenſe vale extended all around them; the *ſea*, nay even the *fiſhes* of the ſea *ſhall declare* to them, *that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this.* And, excepting the ſingle *veſſel* that carries them, they many times *ſee nothing*, for whole weeks together, but what *God* hath *made.* One would think, gratitude and devotion ſhould naturally ſpring up in the mind, from ſuch a proſpect as this. And that, when they can *ſee* nothing but the *works* of God, they ſhould hardly know how to *ſpeak* any thing, but *his praiſe.* Eſpecially conſidering,

2. That they have ſo much *leiſure* to obſerve and contemplate the *works of God*, and take a ſolemn notice of *his* hand in them. For here, as almoſt every object they meet preſents before them the effects of the *divine* power, wiſdom, and goodneſs: ſo there is hardly any thing to hinder their attention to them. The noiſe and hurries of *buſineſs*, that engroſs men's thoughts at home, and the amuſements of *company* and diverſions, that call them off in other places from contemplating the *works* of *God*, are in a great meaſure abſent here; and as they ſee nothing but the works of God on every ſide, they have often little elſe to do, but to converſe with *him*; to meditate on his works, and admire and adore that almighty

ty Being, who *in wiſdom hath made them all.* Let me add,

3. The many *extraordinary occaſions* they have of obſerving the *wonderful works* of God, and *praiſing* him for his *goodneſs*, in their preſervation, and deliverance from the dangers that threaten them. *They that go down to the ſea in ſhips* are (like St. *Paul*, when he went about, from place to place, preaching the *Goſpel*, tho' from other cauſes) *in deaths often.* All the *elements* in their turns, fight againſt them, and threaten to deſtroy them. The *fire* which they kindle for their uſe, may eaſily break out and deſtroy them; the *water* that bears them up, may as ſoon overwhelm and ſink them; nay, the *air*, the *breath of their noſtrils*, may blaſt and conſume them; and the *wind* they depend on to blow them to their port, overſet them by the way, or drive them to meet their deſtruction on the ſhore, where they before had their habitation. In ſhort, *they that go down to the ſea* are expoſed to innumerable dangers and deaths; and ſometimes their *deliverances* are as awful and ſurprizing as the *dangers* they have eſcaped. Providence ſaves them with ſuch *an high hand, and out-ſtretched arm*, that they cannot help ſeeing and acknowledging that their deliverance is *from above.* And they that can *forget* and neglect theſe *wonderful works* of providence for them, deſerve to be *forgotten* and *caſt off* by it.

4.

4. Laſtly, a ſerious obſervation and thankful acknowledgment of the *goodneſs* of God, and *of his works and wonders in the deep*, will help to fortify their minds againſt thoſe dangers they meet there. The thinking on former deliverances, eſpecially if they remember to give the *praiſe* of them where 'tis due, will prepare them to meet freſh dangers, and encourage their hope and truſt, that he who *hath delivered*, and *doth deliver*, *will ſtill deliver*. Nothing will inſpire the mind with courage in the face of dangers, like a ſteddy belief of the *providence* of God, and a conſciouſneſs of being under its *care* and *protection*. Now by giving *God* the glory of the former deliverances he hath wrought for them, they will take the moſt effectual courſe to beſpeak and engage his protection for time to come. However, if they do but *commit the keeping* of themſelves to *him in well-doing*, they may reſt aſſured that whatever becomes of their *ſhip* and *cargo*, yet their moſt *valuable treaſure* is inſured, and will certainly be forth-coming. And conſidering how many *dangers you that go down to the ſea in ſhips*, &c. muſt expect to meet, methinks it ſhould be the firſt care of every one of you to ſecure his *chief* intereſt; that ſo if you ſhould *ſuffer ſhipwreck* of all the reſt, the *ſoul* however may not *become a caſt-away:* and though you ſhould not return to your *native country* on earth, yet being *born from above*, you may aſcend *thi-*

ther. How many have you known, and how many more have you heard of, that have *gone abroad never to return*; and while they were *ſailing* on *one ocean*, have found themſelves all of a ſudden *launched* on *another?* I mean, on the *vaſt ocean of eternity!* And how do you know, when you are *going down to the ſea*, but that you alſo may be *ſetting out for eternity?* Now 'tis the part of *wiſdom* to foreſee dangers, and, if they can't be avoided, to prepare to meet them. And if you did but *conſider the things that belong to your everlaſting peace*, as much as you conſult your *temporal* intereſt, you wou'd no more venture on a voyage, without *inſuring* your *ſouls*, than you will now without *inſuring* your *ſhip*, or *cargo*. You wou'd not think yourſelves ready to *ſail*, till you had made ſome *preparation* to *die*; becauſe there is hazard leſt you ſhould come to the end of your *lives*, before you have finiſh'd your *voyage*. 'Tis true, we are no where ſecure from the aſſault of *Death*. We may be arreſted by it at home, as well as abroad; by *land* as well as by *ſea*. And therefore we ought to be eaſy in no place, till we are prepared to meet it. That man muſt be a *fool*, that will venture to *live*, a day longer, in ſuch a ſtate, as he would not venture to *die* in; ſince, for ought he knows, to-morrow *he may die*. Let us all learn this great point of *wiſdom* then, ſince we can be in no place ſecure from the approach

of

of *Death*, to be contented in none, till we are *prepar'd* to *meet* it. And this is a leſſon, which, if my *text* does not directly lead me to inculcate on you, the *Providence* however, that occaſion'd my diſcourſing on it, does ſenſibly teach you. Our *deceaſed friend* indeed had the *ſentence of death* in himſelf, ſome time before he *died:* Tho' his diſtemper was of that nature[a], that it would have very much indiſpos'd him for preparing to *meet* the enemy, it warned him to *expect*; if he had been yet to prepare for it. But, happy for him! his preparation was not *now* to be made. And yet his death was in ſome reſpect very *ſudden* too. He ſat down to dinner as well as uſual, ſince the diſtemper firſt ſeiz'd him, and then roſe up and *died*. Does not ſuch a *providence* ſenſibly repeat that awful exhortation of *ſcripture* to us all? *Be ye therefore ready alſo, for in ſuch an hour, as ye think not, the Son of man cometh*[b]. You may be remov'd out of the world with as *little ceremony*, as he was; and, conſidering the *continuance* of *his* diſorder, upon a much *ſhorter notice*. You cannot be ſure, that a *diſtemper* ſhall come before to let you know, that *death* and *judgment* are following. Or the diſtemper, that ſhou'd *give* you notice of your death, may be ſuch as will render you incapable of *taking* it. But, ſuppoſing you ſhou'd be thus *warned* out of your *earthly houſe*, and that your memory and underſtanding remain

[a] A dead palſy. [b] *Matth.* xxiv. 44.

unimpaired by bodily diſorder and decay; yet let me aſk you, and beſeech you to aſk yourſelves, this ſerious queſtion: can you prepare to *depart* on ſo *ſhort a warning?* Are you ſo ſoon made *ready* for another world? So quickly dreſs'd, and habited, to *appear before God?* ——'Tis certainly ſomething of the lateſt to *prepare* for death, when you are called to *encounter* it; and make *ready* for judgment, when your *trial* is actually coming on. If it be only a journey of conſequence to be taken, (as one ſays[a]) that man would be pointed at for a fool, who ſhould have all to ſeek the very morning he is to ſet out, the way to learn, *&c.* Or if you are going a voyage only to *another country*, you think yourſelves obliged to make preparation for it, before the ſhip, that you go in, *weighs anchor*. And can you yet think it ſoon enough to prepare for a voyage to *another world*, when your laſt diſtemper, like a ſtrong tide, is actually carrying you downward *on your paſſage* to it? This is ſuch *folly* as no man would be *guilty* of, or every man beſides would condemn him for in any other caſe. But certainly a man's folly is infinitely greater and more flagrant, where his ſoul and his eternal intereſts are concerned, becauſe there 'tis like to prove moſt of all dangerous and deſtructive. If you would not therefore leave the moſt important *buſineſs* of life to be done in the very worſt *ſeaſon* for it, be perſuaded to apply yourſelves to it without any further delay

[a] Dr. *Groſvenor.*

delay. To put it off to *another* day, may be putting it off to your *laſt day*. To another *day*, did I ſay? *This night thy ſoul may be required of thee.* If therefore you think your ſouls need your care, and deſerve your conſideration, begin from *this hour* to entertain ſome ſerious thoughts about them: And *commit the keeping* of your ſouls *in well doing to a faithful* Creator *now*, that ſo you may be able to reſign them with chearfulneſs and confidence, when he, that *gave* them, ſhall bid them *return.* Look to him, who is gone to *prepare a place for you in his father's houſe*, and yield yourſelves to the conduct of his word and ſpirit, that you may be prepared to *ſit down together with him in heavenly places*, when this *earthly houſe of* your *tabernacle* ſhall be *diſſolved.* And don't give *ſleep* to your *eyes*, nor *ſlumber* to your *eye-lids*, while your title to *heaven* remains doubtful and uncertain. *Heaven* and *hell* are at a wide diſtance from each other, and 'tis a *dreadful ſuſpence*, to be in doubt *which* of theſe different ſtates we *belong* to; eſpecially when we find ourſelves advancing to the *borders* of the one or other. To ſtand on the edge of *eternity*, and yet not know, whether 'tis an eternity of *happineſs* or *miſery*, that I am ſtepping into——O the horror of leaving this world under ſo *black* and *dark a cloud!*——But I forbear enlarging further, that I may leave room to mention ſome uſeful reflections, that ariſe from the foregoing Diſcourſe. And,

Firſt

Firſt, How fooliſh, and ſenſeleſs a thing is it, to aſcribe theſe *wonderful works* of God, and this regular and orderly frame of nature to *chance?* In truth, *chance* is a word, that expreſſes nothing, but the *ignorance* or *prejudices* of thoſe, who uſe it, and aſcribe ſuch *ſtupendous effects* to it. If we conſider only this beautiful *fabric* we inhabit; by what amazing art 'tis framed and ſupported! how wiſe the ſituation of it! how regular the diſtribution of the ſeveral parts of it! with what numerous and various inhabitants it is repleniſh'd! and what abundant proviſion is made for them all! we muſt believe that none but an *Almighty Architect* could be equal to ſo vaſt a *deſign*. "Did "you ever know (to borrow the words of an "excellent writer [a]) any *great work*, in which "there was variety of parts, and an orderly "diſpoſition of the whole, done by *chance?*" Did you ever hear, for inſtance, of a *fine picture*, that was drawn by *chance?* Or, of a regular *building*, that was raiſed without *workmen?* Or of a beautiful *ſhip*, that was formed without a *builder?* "And is a *man* "eaſier made than his *picture?*" Or the *whole world* ſooner built than a *ſingle habitation* [b]? Or does it require leſs art to form the *ſea* itſelf, than to build a *veſſel* to float upon it? Alas, what is the moſt magnificent *build-*

[a] *Tillotſon's Works*, Vol. II. p. 555.

[b] Quòd ſi mundum efficere poteſt concurſus atomorum, cur porticum, cur templum, cur domum, cur urbem non poteſt? quæ ſunt minùs operoſa, et multò quidem faciliora. CICER. *de nat. deor.* lib. II. cap. XXXVII.

building in the world, in compariſon of the ſtructure of the *earth* itſelf? Or what is the architecture of the nobleſt *ſhip*, you can *go down to the ſea in*, if compared with the *works* and *wonders* you *ſee* there? Nay, the ſtructure of the meaneſt *fly* or *inſect* on *earth*, or of the ſmalleſt *fiſh* that ſwims in the *ſea*, is enough to ſhame and confound the moſt admired compoſitions of human art and labour. And yet, tho' all mankind would point him out for a fool, who ſhould imagine that the pooreſt *Hutt* or *Tent*, he ſees in any part of the earth, came thither by *chance*; there are ſome men, who ſee not (or at leaſt pretend not to ſee) the abſurdity of ſuppoſing, that the curious and magnificent ſtructure of the *earth* itſelf, and of the various *beings* that inhabit it, aroſe from no other *cauſe*. If I might be allowed to ſpeak to ſuch men in the language of *ſcripture*, I would ſay to them, what I have before applied to others; *Speak to the* earth, *and it ſhall* teach *thee*; *and the* fiſhes *of the ſea ſhall* declare *unto thee: Who knoweth not in all theſe that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?*

ANOTHER reflection I would make on what has been ſaid, you may take in the words of the *Pſalmiſt*, *The works of the Lord are great, ſought out of all them that have pleaſure therein.* There is nothing little, nothing contemptible among the *works of God*; no errors or imperfections, no defects or redundancies, in any part of the creation; but

but as *manifold* as his *works* are, *in wiſdom hath he made them all.* And there is a noble pleaſure in contemplating the works of *God*, and tracing out his being and perfections in them. *For the inviſible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made*, (if they are obſerved and underſtood themſelves) *even his eternal power and godhead*[a]. God has written his name in plain characters in his *works*, as well as in his *word*, and he expects it ſhould be read and obſerved by mankind, in the one, as well as in the other; and has given us reaſon and underſtanding for that purpoſe. And therefore not to obſerve and attend to the works of *God*, and much more to ſlight and deſpiſe them, would be to *abuſe ourſelves*, as well as throw *contempt* on our *Maker*, and rob ourſelves of one of the principal *pleaſures*, which, as *rational beings*, we are capable of receiving. And if the works of the Lord are great,

LET us think, in the next place, of the inconceivable grandeur and majeſty of *God* himſelf; and ever ſtand in awe of him, who *hath* thus *made the earth by his power, eſtabliſhed the world by his wiſdom, and ſtretched out the heaven by his underſtanding. He ſitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as graſshoppers.* Nay, *the nations*

[a] Rom. i. 20.

nations are as the drop of the bucket, and are counted as the ſmall duſt of the balance; behold he taketh up the iſles as a very little thing. When he *goeth forth, he maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind. When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he cauſeth the vapours to aſcend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treaſures.* When he appears, *the hills are melted like wax, and the mountains flow down at his preſence: the foundations of the earth ſhake, and the pillars of heaven are aſtoniſhed at him. Lo theſe are parts of his ways, but how little a portion is heard of him? But the thunder of his power who can underſtand?*

Again; how amazing is the ſtupidity of thoſe perſons, *that go down to the ſea, and ſee the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep,* and yet forget God? When every object, they can turn their eyes to, ſtrives to bring their *Maker* into their minds, and they have ſo many ſpecial *occaſions* to remember him; one would think *God* ſhould be *in all their thoughts.* And yet 'tis given as the general character of a wicked man, that *God is not in all his thoughts*[a]. And, I fear, this character is too generally applicable to *ſea-faring perſons*; tho', I truſt, there are ſome exceptions to it in this audience. *He*

[a] Pſal. x. 4.

maketh a path thro' the great waters, and yet they perceive not his *approach*. *He walketh*, yea he *flieth on the wings of the wind*, and yet they are inſenſible of his *preſence*. *The ſea roars, and the floods clap their hands*, to proclaim his power and dominion, but they underſtand not their *voice*. And tho', perhaps, when *he raiſeth the ſtormy wind, that lifteth up the waves of the ſea*, and threatens to bury them quickly under them, they *cry to the Lord in their diſtreſs*; yet no ſooner are they arrived at their *deſired port*, but they forget who *brought* them thither. Strange! that men will always *forget God*, till he *tear them in pieces, and there be none to deliver!*

FINALLY, let the ſight and contemplation of the *wonderful works* of God, raiſe and enflame our deſires to *ſee God himſelf*. Here we are *ſearching* after *God:* we read his name in his *word*, and ſpell it out in his *works*; and do not *ſearch* altogether in vain. He hath ſent us into the world on this errand indeed, to *enquire where is the Lord our Maker*, and he hath ordered every *creature* we aſk to tell us, ſo that we have not far to ſeek for an anſwer. And yet after all, *who can by ſearching find out* God? *who can find out the Almighty to perfection?* However, there are regions of light and knowledge, that lie beyond this *land of darkneſs* and *valley of death*, which *Chriſtianity* has open'd to our view, and whither we hope e'er long to arrive; where we ſhall be raiſed above all our preſent uncertainties

tainties and imperfections; ſhall no more be put to *feel after him, if haply we can find him,* but ſhall be admitted into his immediate preſence, to *behold his face, and ſee him, as he is.*

NOW we ſee thro' a glaſs darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then ſhall we know, even as we alſo are known.

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